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QUESTION OF EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION ON AND INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

CONTENTS

Page

REPLIES FROM MEMBER STATES

Mauritania 2

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

[Original: French]

[12 October 1993]

1. The strength of any organization lies in its capacity to adapt continually to the evolution of its environment and, a contrario, the greatest risk it runs is that of remaining rigid and out of step with the realities of the times.

2. This rule certainly applies to the United Nations, which is preparing to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary in a context that is fundamentally different from that in which it was founded.

3. The world has changed profoundly since 1945, and the challenges facing it today are complex and varied.

4. The international community has more than ever need of an effective instrument in order to confront these vast challenges, and, while the United Nations is, unquestionably, the most appropriate framework, it is imperative that it adapt to the new situations through a process of restructuring and revitalization of all its organs.

5. It is gratifying to observe that, after all the efforts made to redynamize the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, consideration has now been accorded to and has even made headway on the question of the composition and the mode of operation of the Security Council, which is one of the principal organs of the United Nations. Indeed, the Council assumes the principal responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and, for that purpose, has access to the use of force.

6. In that regard, the Security Council should enjoy high moral authority through the support and confidence of all the States Members of the Organization on whose behalf it acts under Article 24 of the Charter.

7. The increase that occurred in 1963 to meet the need to take account of the increase in the membership of the Organization, which had risen from 51 founding States to 114 countries, was amply justified. Today, the admission of 70 new countries, bringing the membership to 184, justifies another increase.

8. It is, moreover, essential that the Security Council should operate amid collegiality and transparency in order to ensure all States Members of the Organization, those on behalf of which it acts and which are bound to implement its decisions and to assume the economic and political consequences thereof, access to its deliberations and decision making.

9. These reforms, which have to be inspired by the spirit of the Secretary-General's report entitled "An agenda for peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), can only enhance the prestige of the Security Council, strengthen the legitimacy of its action and guarantee the support and active participation of all States Members of the Organization in the implementation of all its decisions.

10. They should enable this important organ to act with all the necessary credibility and authority and, consequently, to strengthen its capacity to face up to its new responsibilities, of which preventive diplomacy should be a privileged modality.

11. Mauritania hopes that this important question will be the subject of a fruitful debate during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, with a view to the adoption of the measures required for 1995, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

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CONTENTS

Page

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM MEMBER STATES

United Republic of Tanzania* 2

* Transmitted by the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania in his capacity as Chairman of the African Group.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA*

[Original: English]

[10 August 1993]

1. The African Group of States Members of the United Nations submits herewith its position on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council (General Assembly resolution 47/62), as decided by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its fifty-eighth ordinary session, which convened at Cairo in June 1993.

2. Africa supports the current efforts aimed at ensuring a more balanced composition in the membership of the Security Council. In this context, the Group of African States is strongly in favour of any initiative that will ensure equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council, for the following reasons:

(a) The Security Council is playing an ever increasing and crucial role in the efforts of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security;

(b) The need for greater and broader involvement of the United Nations membership in the Council's decision-making process;

(c) The substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations;

(d) The realization of the overall need to continue the revitalization of the organs of the United Nations based on the principles, purposes and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, taking into account the changes taking place in the world;

(e) The need to ensure equitable geographical distribution.

3. In view of the increased involvement of the Security Council in discharging its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, conferred on it by the States Members of the Organization as a whole, it is increasingly important that the Council's work should reflect the provision in Article 24 of the Charter that "in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf".

4. In this connection, it is Africa's view that there should be an emphasis on the value of maintaining transparency in the Council's deliberative and decision-making processes.

5. Therefore, the agenda of informal consultations should be made available to all Members of the United Nations. There should also be greater utilization of formal meetings, to enable all Members to participate.

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* Transmitted by the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania in his capacity as Chairman of the African Group.

6. It is the view of the Group of African States that the Council's membership should be enlarged by increasing both permanent and non-permanent seats.

7. Efforts should be made to eliminate the veto prerogative. If maintained, the additional permanent members should be granted the same status as the current five permanent members of the Council, and efforts to limit the use of the veto to certain specific issues only should be seriously pursued.

8. As far as the allocation of additional Security Council seats is concerned, Africa should have two permanent seats with all privileges attached to permanent membership, and more non-permanent seats.

9. The African Group is of the view that the conclusion of the negotiations leading to the enlargement of the Security Council should be planned to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, that is, in 1995.